responding to a user indicia to dynamically link to a particular segment and play the segment;

responding to a user indicia to expand a link to another segment and playing the segment, the segment providing additional information pertaining to the current segment;

providing live information;

capturing and playing a continuous content, comprising:

playing at least one stored content segment;

determining whether a content expansion is desired;

linking to another segment; and

playing the another segment;

capturing a live data stream and archiving the captured data stream in segments;

A3

wherein if an expansion cue has not been selected:

determining whether the continuity link of the segment indicates a non-segment;

if the continuity link indicates a segment, setting the current segment to the continuity link segment and fetching a segment descriptor;

if the continuity link indicates a non-segment, determining if a link stack is empty; and

halting the playing of segments if the link stack is empty.

REMARKS

The Examiner has rejected all of the claims under 35 USC 103(a), some as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,182,712 to Hunt et al. (hereinafter Hunt), and others over Hunt in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,128,712 B1 to Savchenko et al. (hereinafter Savchenko).

Applicants believe that the claims, particularly as amended, are distinguishable from Hunt, Savchenko, and the remaining art of record. Per the amendment, limitations have been added to claims 1 and 10 to require that one or more expansion cues be highlighted after the playing of a segment starts. A determination is made prior to reaching the end of the segment if expansion is desired based on whether an expansion cue has been selected. Such cues can be links, the numbers on a baseball player's jersey, etc. Support for these amendments can be found on pages 33-34 of the application as originally filed.

Hunt describes multimedia works as those in which segments are replayed, and at the end of a segment, a succeeding segment is selected according to user input. Hunt determines a probability of which segment a user would likely choose upon termination of the current segment. Applicants' invention can be clearly distinguished from Hunt in that Applicants' invention requires *highlighted expansion cues* to determine whether to play a second segment. Further, the user must select the cue *prior to termination* of the segment being played.

Similarly, the Background in Savchenko states that the playback switches from clip to clip in response to user input. Savchenko goes on to describe an example of a video game in which a user's choices in the game affect which video is displayed next. What Savchenko fails to disclose, though is an actual *visual cue* that the user must select *prior to termination* of the segment being played. Savchenko makes no mention of *highlighted expansion cues*.

Claims 2 and 11 are also clearly distinguishable from Hunt and Savchenko. Neither return play to the *original* segment. They only teach continuous play from the original segment *to a sequential segment*. Examiner has relied on Savchenko, which Examiner quotes as saying the clips are bridged such that the segments progress sequentially. It is unclear how a sequential progression (i.e., A →B → C) can be equated with a return to the original segment (i.e., part of A → B → remainder of A). Clarification is respectfully requested.

Savchenko can be thought of as branching, where the computer makes a decision as to what clip to play next so that playback appears to be part of one continuous flow. Applicants' invention according to some of the claims is different in that the playback does not "branch" from one prespecified clip to another but rather allows the user to select *any* clip for which a cue is highlighted. Further, the clip being played back can be "expanded" by pausing playback, replaying a selected clip, then continuing playback.

Claims 2-9 depend from the amended claim 1, and claims 11-19 depend from the amended claim 10. By virtue of their dependency from the amended claims 1 and 10, claims 2-9 and 11-19 are now also believed to be allowable.

CONCLUSION

Claims 1-20 remain pending. Based upon the foregoing amendment and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-20 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early reconsideration and issuance of a patent are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____ Date: August 8, 2012

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Appendix 1

For the Examiner's convenience, all of the claims have been reproduced below.

Amended and new claims are denoted with (AMENDED) and (NEW), respectively.

NOTE: Underlining denotes added text. Brackets denote deleted text.

1. (AMENDED) A method for playing stored information, comprising the steps of:

   retrieving information comprising one or more segments, wherein each of said segments has a beginning and an end, and wherein at least one segment is associated with one or more links to one or more second segments;

   playing said at least one segment;

   highlighting at least one expansion cue after the playing of the at least one segment starts;

   determining prior to reaching the end if expansion is desired based on whether an expansion cue has been selected; and

   expanding the link to one or more second segments and playing the one or more segments.

2. A method for playing stored information as recited in claim 1, including the step of returning play to the original segment after expanding the link to one or more segments and playing the one or more segments.

3. A method for playing stored information as recited in claim 2, wherein the information in the one or more segments includes information from a multimedia source.

4. A method for playing stored information as recited in claim 3, wherein the information in the one or more segments includes information from a network with support for an internet protocol.

5. A method for playing stored information as recited in claim 1, including the step of responding to a user indicia to expand a link to another segment and playing the segment.

6. A method for playing stored information as recited in claim 1, including the step of responding to a user indicia to contract a link to another segment.

7. A method for playing stored information as recited in claim 1, including the step of responding to a user indicia to dynamically link to a particular segment and play the segment.

8. A method for playing stored information as recited in claim 1, including the step of responding to a user indicia to expand a link to another segment and playing the segment, the segment providing additional information pertaining to the current segment.

9. A method for playing stored information as recited in claim 1, including the step of providing live information.

10. (AMENDED) A computer program embodied on a computer readable medium for playing stored information, comprising:

code that retrieves information comprising one or more segments, wherein each of the segments has a beginning and an end, and wherein at least one segment is associated with one or more links to one or more second segments;

code that plays the at least one segment;

code that highlights at least one expansion cue after the playing of the at least one segment starts;

code that determines if expansion is desired prior to reaching the end of the at least one segment based on whether an expansion cue has been selected; and

code that expands the link to one or more second segments and plays the one or more segments.

11. The computer program for playing stored information as recited in claim 10, including code that returns play to the original segment after expanding the link to one or more segments and playing the one or more segments.

12. The computer program for playing stored information as recited in claim 11, wherein the information in the one or more segments includes information from a multimedia source.

13. The computer program for playing stored information as recited in claim 12, wherein the information in the one or more segments includes information from a network with support for an internet protocol.

14. The computer program for playing stored information as recited in claim 13, wherein the information in the one or more segments includes information from a broadband network.

15. The computer program for playing stored information as recited in claim 10, including code that responds to a user indicia to expand a link to another segment and play the segment.

16. The computer program for playing stored information as recited in claim 10, including code that responds to a user indicia to contract a link to another segment.

17. The computer program for playing stored information as recited in claim 10, including code that responds to a user indicia to dynamically link to a particular segment and play the segment.

18. The computer program for playing stored information as recited in claim 10, including code that responds to a user indicia to expand a link to another segment and play the segment, the segment providing additional information pertaining to the current segment.

19. The computer program for playing stored information as recited in claim 10, including code that provides live information.

20. (AMENDED) A method for playing stored information [as recited in claim 3], comprising:

initiating an access to a data store;

retrieving information comprising one or more segments from the store, wherein each of the segments has a beginning and an end;

causing at least temporary allocation of resources for playing the segments;

fetching an expansion link list, wherein the fetching of the expansion link list occurs concurrently with the retrieving of the segments, wherein at least one segment is associated with one or more links to one or more second segments;

playing the at least one segment;

highlighting at least one expansion cue after the playing of the at least one segment starts;

determining prior to reaching the end if expansion is desired based on whether an expansion cue has been selected;

expanding the link to one or more second segments and playing the one or more segments;

returning play to the original segment after expanding the link to one or more segments and playing the one or more segments;

wherein the information in the one or more segments includes information from a multimedia source;

wherein the information in the one or more segments includes information from a network with support for an internet protocol;

wherein the information in the one or more segments includes information from a broadband network;

responding to a user indicia to expand a link to another segment and playing the segment;

responding to a user indicia to contract a link to another segment;

responding to a user indicia to dynamically link to a particular segment and play the segment;

responding to a user indicia to expand a link to another segment and playing the segment, the segment providing additional information pertaining to the current segment;

providing live information;

capturing and playing a continuous content, comprising:

playing at least one stored content segment;

determining whether a content expansion is desired;

linking to another segment; and

playing the another segment;

capturing a live data stream and archiving the captured data stream in segments;

wherein if an expansion cue has not been selected:

determining whether the continuity link of the segment indicates a non-segment;

if the continuity link indicates a segment, setting the current segment to the continuity link segment and fetching a segment descriptor;

if the continuity link indicates a non-segment, determining if a link stack is empty; and

halting the playing of segments if the link stack is empty.